

BOARD CHAIR  
Mandy Bolter

BOARD VICE CHAIR  
Stan Stek

BOARD MINORITY VICE CHAIR  
Jim Talen

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

*Finance:*  
Diane Jones

*Legislative:*  
Stan Stek

MEMBERS

Tom Antor  
Emily P. Brieve  
David Bulkowski  
Carol Hennessy  
Matt Kallman  
Betsy Melton  
Roger Morgan  
Stan Ponstein  
Phil Skaggs  
Monica Sparks  
Lindsey Thiel  
Ted Vonk  
Harold Voorhees  
Robert Womack  
Stephen Wooden



## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

300 Monroe Avenue N.W.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503  
Office (616) 632-7580  
Fax (616) 632-7560  
[www.accessKent.com](http://www.accessKent.com)

May 4, 2020

Dear Commissioners,

As you know, early last week Kent County was awarded a COVID-19 Relief Fund grant, also known as the "CARES Fund", of \$114.6 million.

This award presents the County with an opportunity to cover not only our cost incurred due to this pandemic, but also assist our local units of government, community partners, and local small businesses who experienced unexpected cost due to the COVID-19 battle.

While this amount sounds like a lot of money, and it is, it is still a limited resource when considering the magnitude of this crisis. Therefore, both the blessing and the burden falls on our board to QUICKLY establish a transparent, thorough, effective strategy which clearly defines a processes and guidance for the allocation and distribution of these funds.

I can share with you that this have weighed heavily on my mind and I have given much thought to the best way to meet the aforementioned criteria of the actions needed to be taken (transparent, expedited, thorough, effective process).

To that end, as Chair, pursuant to Standing Rule 6.0, I am establishing a COVID Relief Subcommittee to QUICKLY AND THOROUGHLY analyze ALL available funds coming into the County and how they are being applied (FEMA, CDBG, Relief Fund, etc.), the needs of the community and the processes and strategies to allocate and disburse the CARES funds under the guidelines established by the federal government. I am appointing the following Commissioners to serve on the Subcommittee: Commissioners Bolter, Stek, Jones, Brieve, Talen, Morgan, Skaggs, and Womack. The charge of the Subcommittee is to identify available funding sources and the allowable uses of each fund and to recommend to the Kent County Board of Commissioners guidelines for disbursement of the CARES funding. Deadlines for the Subcommittee are as follows:

- No later than June 1, 2020, allocate funds to cover COVID-19 costs already incurred by the County and its estimate of future eligible costs.
- No later than June 1, 2020, recommend guidelines for dispersing funds to local units of government/municipalities to recover their COVID-19 emergency related costs.
- No later than July 20, 2020, recommend guidelines for fund disbursement beyond local/municipal costs (guidance of continued need of the community and usage for remaining funds under federal guidelines).
- No later than December 14, 2020, recommend any and all remaining disbursement of funds that may be held back to ensure all possible and allowable uses and needs have been met.

Funds can be allocated until December 30, 2020 so expected costs and estimates for locals/municipalities through the end of the year can be considered and the subcommittee will be seeking immediate information to consider these expenses as well as the county's expenses. The Subcommittee will utilize County staff to assist this effort. Additionally, we must be cognizant of a potential second wave of infections for which we may want to recommend allocating some funds for a reserve should it materialize.

Lastly, I want to reiterate, and we've all heard it a million times, 'we're all in this together'. It's not lost on any of us that this task falls on us in a very politically charged and intense environment. Those we serve have lost their businesses, jobs, may be food insecure or wondering how they are going to pay their rent. I understand we are on a very tight timeline but that is because of the importance and the urgency of our work. I have faith in all of us to work together – to listen to each other – to understand and assume positive intent in each other. We have an opportunity to set an example for the rest of the state and nation that we can work effectively and cooperatively to serve our community. I'm proud to serve with you all and look forward to working together to get this done!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mandy Bolter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mandy Bolter, Chair  
Kent County Board of Commissioners